

THE RELEASE

July 2015

Website:

www.stcloudmuskies.com



No St. Cloud Chapter General Meeting in July
COMBINED OUTING WITH VIKINGLAND CHAPTER
SUNDAY JULY 19, 2015, from 6 am – 6 pm
LAKE MILTONA
ICE CREAM SOCIAL AND POTLUCK
AT 1:00 PM at VIKING BAY RESORT

Time on the WaterBy Bruce A. Kitowski, President

Happy 4th of July to everyone. We have had a very busy spring this year. Our last event that we held was on June 14th and that was the Waite Park Family Fun Festival Kids Fishing Contest. Once again it was held at the Rock Island Pond. It was a beautiful day, warm day with a slight breeze, and just enough sun to make the fish go crazy. 73 kids registered for the day and everyone caught fish. All fish were released. The winners are as follows:

GIRLS DIVISION...

1ST Place... Elizabeth

2nd Place... Amber

3rd Place... Katty

BOYS DIVISION...

1ST Place... Pete

2nd Place... Haden

3rd Place... Tony

All the children that registered received a gift package of a fun drinking glass, several lures, bobbers, treats that were gummi night crawlers, and other misc. items. The winners received plaques for their trophies.

I also would like to thank all the volunteers that showed up and took the time to help with this event. Tom and Susie Ardolf, Ken Smith (MC), Ken and Norine Schmitt, Aaron Meyer, Jeanne Lodermeier, and Bruce Kitowski. Also Park Meadow Apartments had 4 people that showed. Last but not least Mark Pelham of the DNR was there to help in any way possible. He also brought 8 rods and reels for the kids to use. Once again thank you for making this event a success.



Please remember that there will be no membership meeting in July. We are trying something different this year. Instead of taking a month off in the winter we decided to do it in July because of folks being with their families and on vacation. Hope this works for everyone.

Have a very safe and fun summer and hope to see you on the water!!!

Bruce



WEBMASTER. By Tom Ardolf
July 2015 Webmaster Report

Facebook: As I write this, we are up to 382 LIKES, a gain 34 over the past month!!. I don't know how we got that increase, but that is one of the best gains ever!!! I'm betting some members asked their friends to LIKE us --- so thank you, everyone that helped make this happen!!!

We used the page for last-minute notification of the change to the boat show/meeting date and we had some great pics from various events from the past month: the High School Musky regional event, Waite Park Fun Fest, plus the upcoming joint fishing adventure on Miltona with Alexandria-Vikingland on July 19TH. Keep LIKING us, and getting others to LIKE us!!

Cafepress: No news for this month.

Web Site: Well, the work-load is about to change for this: fish are getting caught! I look forward to everyone's submissions to the Lunge Log, which helps organizations to better musky research.

Other: The position of VP of Finance/Treasurer for Muskies, Inc. is still unfilled. If someone would be interested, please contact me.

I participated in the Waite Park Fun Fest fishing event. The Hugh Becker Foundation underwrites this, and I believe it is a great opportunity to be of service. A good turnout and we had folks to help out. These are our future musky hunters, so it's great to see it turn out so well.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the Chapter.

TOM ARDOLF

Web Guy for St. Cloud Muskies, Inc.
Scmi.webmaster@gmail.com



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COMBINED JULY OUTING

St. Cloud/Alexandria-Vikingland Fishing Event on July 19th

Katee Champion, the President of Vikingland Chapter, is welcoming us to their event on July 19th. We'll fish in the morning, and at 1 PM we will gather at Viking Bay Resort for some ice cream. One thing Katee is asking from us: Can you please go to their Facebook page and JOIN the event, so they have a count of people coming to the event from our chapter. Thanks in advance for doing this. Additional info will be posted on our Facebook page as it becomes available.

Also, the lunch will be a "potluck". Alexandria/Vikingland will bring brats and burgers. If we can bring some buns to complement their stuff, plus some chips, salads or whatever side dish you'd like to bring, that would be great. Most people bring their own drinks but beverages are available. The Alex folks will be bringing ice cream, cones, toppings, etc. I have an ice cream social bag with scoops, bowls, etc. so we'll be ready to dole out the ice cream they provide. Looks like a great time!!!

PROGRAM DIRECTOR REPORT By Aaron Meyer

Hi everyone,

July is approaching, the weather has been good, and muskie season is well under way. I hope you've all had a chance to get out and enjoy it.

A few MMPA reps and I recently attended a special meeting called by the DNR's Esox Work Group. The meeting was called to supplement our regular workshops and continue our discussion on the future of pike management in MN. We are trying to find a solution to our pike problems that will be effective while still being acceptable to both anglers and spearers. As I've written about in past newsletters, the plan is to divide Minnesota into three distinct pike management zones. Currently, there are roughly 100 lakes with individual special pike regulations. The proposed changes would leave those special regulations in place- this zone strategy would replace the current dysfunctional one-size-fits-all statewide regulation. The zones will be managed with regulations designed to address the unique challenges specific to each part of the state. One zone will encompass roughly the southern 1/4th of the state. Another zone will be the Arrowhead region. The largest zone will be called the North-Central zone, encompassing much of central and northern Minnesota.

This North-Central zone is where the majority of the "problem pike populations" exist. These lakes are defined by high pike densities, high spawning rates, and low growth rates. These problems have been caused by decades of too much harvest on pike over 24 inches. Besides the obvious over-abundance of small pike and a lack of mid-to large pike, this has also resulted in depleted perch populations and reduced recruitment of stocked walleyes. Lakes within this zone will prove to be the most difficult to repair.

The current DNR proposal for the North-Central zone revolves around trying to change angler/spearer attitudes towards pike harvest. Pike need to be viewed as a fish that can and should be kept in high numbers at a small size, similar to panfish, rather than keeping a few larger fish for eating as is the current common practice. Keeping those bigger fish is the direct cause of all our problems.

The direction we're headed is potentially a 10 fish pike limit under 22 inches, a protected slot from 22-26 inches, and one fish allowed over 26 or 28 inches. It's very important to understand that these regulations are intended to help restore balance to our pike populations, and allow more pike to reach larger size, while still allowing pike to be a viable harvest fishery. These regs are not intended to turn our lakes into "trophy" pike fisheries. It's also very important to understand that protecting medium size pike will do much more to create more balanced pike populations than regulations protecting those few large pike would.

The greatest challenge to all of this is finding a regulation that accomplishes these things without keeping spearers from being able to practice their sport. Without some cooperation and agreement from the Darkhouse Association these new regulations are unlikely to pass into law. We've been working hard to end the

decades-old tension between muskie anglers and spearers while also trying to solve the pike management problems. The catch is that slot limits are difficult to operate under when you can't measure a fish prior to spearing it. This latest Esox workshop revolved around trying to solve this problem. Essentially, we will have to choose some sort of exception that allows people to spear without fear of being criminalized for making a mistake in judging the size of a pike.

Several ideas were presented, and discussed in detail. My greatest concern was that these exceptions would allow too much harvest within the critical slot limit and render the new regs useless. The DNR assured me that their harvest models suggest that these options would still allow the slots to be effective. The reason this could still work is simply the fact that spearers make up such a small portion of the over-all angling public.

It seems there are two options that have the most potential. These options revolve around the 22-26 inch protected slot limit and the 10 fish bag limit. It would then allow one of the following exceptions for spearing:

1. The first option was labeled "one and done". This would allow a spearer to take one pike within the protected slot limit as part of their daily bag. However, if they harvested a fish within the protected slot they would be done for the day and would have to go home, regardless of how many more fish the bag limit allows. Essentially, this would "punish" someone for taking a slot fish by ending their day. This option would encourage spearers to learn to accurately judge fish and not harvest within the protected slot so that they could continue spearing that day.
2. The other option would allow one pike to be speared within the protected slot, and still allow for one fish above the slot size like the angling regulation would. This option allows a spearer to make a mistake and still continue to participate that day, However that person would have to make extra sure that any additional fish would be above or below the protected slot... bringing us back to the problem of judging fish size. This option allows the most leeway for spearers, allowing for the most active participation. It's downside is that it doesn't really punish or discourage harvest within the protected slot.

Having been closely involved in all of his for years now, it was surprising to me that a lead representative of the Darkhouse Association pointed out that this 2nd option portrays the image of giving spearers "special treatment" and that they feared this would be viewed negatively by the larger angling public. This is a very good point, and leads me to think that the first option is really the best fit for them. It seems to me that our efforts to find compromise and work together are beginning to be reciprocated. Personally, I feel the first option is the best fit to keep the new regulations effective.

This all raises another question: Is the angling public willing to accept regulations that are different for angling and spearing? For me personally, if it means passing new regulations that will begin to improve the balance in our pike fisheries, my answer is YES- ABSOLUTELY!

In the end this entire issue can be summed up in one question that we all need to ask ourselves and our fellow anglers:

Are you willing to harvest more small pike (under 22 inches) and fewer medium sized ones if it will help the overall health and balance of our fisheries- including helping increase recruitment of stocked walleyes?

Think about it.

Aaron MN Muskie and Pike Alliance Co-Chair



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MEMBERSHIP REPORT • • • • • By Nate Rose

In June we added 6 new members, which is great to see! The new members include Daniel Matt, Tammy Matt, Justin Sharer, Nicole Sharer, Courtney Sharer, and Scott Wold. Please welcome them to the club if you see them. Up for renewal we've got Todd Weers in July. The easiest way to renew your membership is online. The website (muskiesinc.org) should prompt you for renewal once your membership expires.

Spread the word and encourage anyone interested in muskie fishing/management to join our chapter, it would be great to see our chapter grow.

CONTEST REPORT • • • • • By Nate Rose

The 2015 season is underway finally and we've got some fish to show for it. Nice job to everyone that was able to hook up! Some nice fish are being caught including two 47" fish registered by Tom and Eric. Water temps have been warm for the beginning of the season so hopefully the numbers keep climbing. I know personally even though I boated one fish, we don't seem to be seeing all that many follows. Same goes for reports from other anglers as well. Some fish are likely over open water yet so don't be afraid to check deeper water. Good luck to everyone in July!

Contest Standings July 1, 2015

CURRENT STANDINGS				
Division	Name	# of Fish	Points	Largest
Mens Masters	Bryan J Thompson	1	16	42.00
Mens	Thomas Ardolf	2	40	47.00
	Alex Lauer	2	33	44.50
	Eric W Poissant	2	29	47.00
	Nathan Rose	1	13	38.50

LUNKER OF THE MONTH			
Month	Name	Size	Lake
June	Thomas Ardolf	47.00	Mille Lacs
	Eric W Poissant	47.00	Alex

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PARTNER DEVELOPMENT • • • • • By Ron Sanders

Upon return from our Winter home, much more attention has been focused on continued development of this program. At a recent Board Meeting and we discuss the process for fulfillment to our Partners and we are all comfortable with this aspect. We have a couple of new partners in the closing stages and have initiated application for Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians and its Grand Casinos.

While the more long term Partner Program is the ultimate goal, additional time will be driven to find Sponsor Advertisers/Donors to build up Advertising Revenue.

One of the major benefits of being an Annual Partner is to Present their Product and Service via having the right to provide a monthly Seminar Speaker, either someone within their company or being the Presenting Sponsor of one of our speakers.

In addition, we will also be making an increased effort in promoting the Meeting and Speakers, which will benefit all of us.

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